

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHNR #5156/01 3500645
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 160645Z DEC 05
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8446
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 7912
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA 0337
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD//
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA //POLAD//
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//POLAD//
RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//POLAD//
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 005156

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF, EUR
STATE PASS AID
LONDON, PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/14/2025
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [ASEC](#) [KPAO](#) [EAID](#) [SO](#) [KE](#)
SUBJECT: SOMALIA: ITALIAN DEPUTY MFA SEEKS USG - EU UNITY

NAIROBI 4957

SUMMARY

1. (C) Italy's Deputy Foreign Minister Alfredo Mantica queried Ambassador December 13 on the probable outcome of the USG's Somalia policy review. He confidently pushed for the USG to join a "common EU position" in support of the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) Prime Minister and the executive in Jowhar -- while just an hour before reportedly expressing considerable doubt as to whether EU members could agree on any such course of action. Nonetheless, Mantica made a strong argument for the final primacy of the Somali Parliament as the true legitimate expression of the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs), and urged USG and EU unity in promoting a reconvening of the MPs in Parliamentary session. The EU has scheduled a key Africa Working Group meeting on Somalia for January 11. END SUMMARY.

MANTICA:
THE PM IS SOMALIA'S FUTURE

2. (C) Italian Deputy Foreign Minister (and Senator) Alfredo Mantica told Ambassador and Somali Watcher December 13 he was transiting Nairobi en route to Asmara, after a week of discussions at the UN in New York, and with USG officials in Washington December 5-9. He said the focus of his current mission was the Ethiopia-Eritrea border stalemate, but that he would take the opportunity to meet with international community members during his overnight in Nairobi. (NOTE: The Somali press and rumor mill is full of Mantica's visit, connecting it to speculation that he would open an Italian delegation office in Jowhar, and had come with pockets full of cash. Press also made links to the anti-Italy rallies in Mogadishu on December 11 in which MPs called for the dismissal of the Italian Envoy for Somalia, Senator Mario Rafaelli. However, Mantica gave no indication that he would be making a stop in Somalia on this trip, or meeting with Somali TFI officials. END NOTE)

3. (C) Mantica quickly set out the Italian position on

Somalia, stating up front that Italy now sees TFG President Yusuf as "yesterday's man", and that the GOI focus is on TFG Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi. On the other side of the divide in the TFIs, Mantica saw the Speaker of the Transitional Federal Parliament, Shariff Hassan Sheikh Adan, as the other principal protagonist. The D-MFA focused his commentary on this duo as the key to solving the political impasse.

¶4. (C) In Mantica's opinion, the Speaker must be made to see that he is responsible for convening Parliament. This the speaker could not do if he were also determined to act as head of a political faction -- an activity in which Mantica seemed convinced the Speaker is engaging. He stated that all of the TFI actors derived their legitimacy from the Parliament, and so the Parliament must come together and resume work -- not likely in Mogadishu in the near term, but perhaps in a series of towns wherever reasonably safe. He opined that the Speaker's cooperation in bringing the Mogadishu-based MPs together was critical, with the Jowhar executive to be convinced to deliver their loyalists.

¶5. (C) Mantica stressed that the current stalemate could not continue, and the status quo was unacceptable. He said all care must be given that the international community not institutionalize the split in the TFIs. The D-MFA reported that his boss, Minister of Foreign Affairs Fini, had written to PM Gedi to urge him to move toward joining the Speaker in convening Parliament. He suggested that further efforts to push the two sides together would come from Brussels once a common EU position had been settled upon.

JOIN THE UNITED EU POSITION

¶6. (C) The D-MFA reported that documents are in circulation within the European Union in preparation for January 11 Africa Working Group meeting, at which EU member states would seek to define a common position on engagement with Somalia. He said the EU process would inevitably hinge on the answer to a key question -- What is the USG doing and thinking? Mantica said that his USG interlocutors in his discussions in New York and Washington had indicated that a policy review was under way, and so asked Ambassador directly where the review was likely to go.

¶7. (C) Mantica stressed that while a united EU position was necessary, it was not sufficient to bring a new impetus to the Somali situation. He appealed for the US to maintain close communication with Brussels and Rome, in an effort to bring our positions into greater harmony -- or at least to minimize our dis-harmony.

USG POLICY REVIEW

¶8. (C) Ambassador confirmed that indeed, a policy review was underway, with meetings through December focused on Somalia. He stressed that he could not predict the exact outcome of the review, but expected that it would define a more active approach. Ambassador said this would likely include outreach to all parties to the Somali political stalemate, specifying this meant engagement with both the "executive" in Jowhar, and the MP group in Mogadishu, as well as a possible step toward the authorities in Somaliland.

¶9. (C) Ambassador stressed that the basis of our policy to date, and the driving force behind a review, has been our focus on the terrorist threat that emanates from Somalia. He opined that the Jihadist elements within the larger Islamist communities were growing stronger, were certainly more active, and potentially more dangerous, benefiting from the political stalemate that blocked the TFIs from presenting a secular alternative to religious domination of the political field.

¶10. (C) Ambassador noted that many members of the international community appeared set on providing direct and significant support to the "executive" in Jowhar to the

exclusion of other potential recipients of assistance. While this might be a plausible strategy, it was also risky. Ambassador urged that all international community members take into account facts on the ground. These included the repeated and consistent violations of the Transitional Federal Charter committed by all sides over the last year of TFI existence; the risk that particular players in the political stalemate are developing far greater popularity from the international community than they are capable of garnering from the Somali people; the apparent fact that the larger number of MPs are aligned against the Jowhar executive; and the worry that the funds flowing into the executive were a disincentive for them to engage in dialogue. Ambassador urged Mantica to reflect on these concerns, in order that the international community could properly calibrate its engagement to maximize the incentives for dialogue.

COMMENT:

11. (C) Post notes that, at a lunch with Somalia Watcher on December 14, the EC Nairobi Delegation's Senior Political Advisor on Somalia stated that Mantica is considerably less certain of the outcome of the EU's policy discussion than he represented to Ambassador the previous day. EC Delegation staff met with the D-MFA in the two hours prior to his conversation with Ambassador. In that discussion, according to our EC colleague, Mantica stressed the position of several EU member states, especially the UK, that did not agree with the "Jowhar-centric, Gedi-first" approach he so confidently set before Ambassador. Our EC colleague opined that the EU's process would likely remain in its own stalemate, unless member states got a clear signal from Washington on new USG policy directives. END COMMENT.

BELLAMY